

## April 2 PPEL Renewal Vote

Mark your calendars to vote at a special school election on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at Mount Vernon City Hall from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the renewal the district's \$1.34 PPEL funding levy.

The Mount Vernon school district currently has the voter approved Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) that is used for school facilities construction projects, building and grounds repairs, and the purchase of school equipment and school buses. The community originally approved this ten year PPEL funding property tax levy at a special election in 2001 at the property tax rate of \$1.34 and then in 2010 the community voted to renew the ten year \$1.34 PPEL levy. The current ten year voter approved PPEL levy will expire on June 30, 2021.

The School Board discussed the possible renewal of the voter approved PPEL funding at the January 14, 2019 School Board meeting. At that meeting the School Board approved setting a special election on Tuesday, April 2, 2019 at Mount Vernon City Hall from 7:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. on the renewal of the ten year \$1.34 PPEL funding property tax levy.

- The PPEL levy provides the district with about \$430,000 annually
- It is a property tax levy of \$1.34 per \$1,000 of a property's taxable assessed valuation
- Renewal of this levy will not increase property taxes
- Passage of the PPEL election requires approval by a majority of the voters
- About 80% of Iowa school districts have the voter approved PPEL levy
- Bringing the PPEL vote to the community in April will allow the District to develop a comprehensive maintenance and facility renovation plan in a more timely fashion, as it plans future projects and purchases that will occur after completion of the current bond construction projects.
- Significant changes are coming to how municipal and school elections are held, and completing the election this April may ultimately save the District money in running such an election while also ensuring that this important issue does not get lost among many other issues that may appear on a ballot at the same time. An April 2019 vote would be exclusive to the PPEL extension.

The primary use of the PPEL funds, about 50%, is for daily repairs of school buildings and grounds. The district also spends about 15% of the funds for the purchase of school buses and other vehicles, with the remaining 35% used for a variety of building and grounds major renovation type projects. If the PPEL levy were to be renewed by the community for another ten years, it is anticipated that the funding would continue to be used in the same manner.

Examples of some of the projects PPEL funds financed:

- In 2002, a three classroom addition west of the middle school auditorium was constructed
- In 2006, a portion of PPEL funds were used for the construction project that included the new high school building and remodeling of the current middle school building
- In 2010, the large capacity middle school water heater was replaced
- In 2013, a portion of PPEL funds were used for the construction of new elementary school classrooms and renovation of existing elementary school classrooms
- In 2014, the middle school auditorium was renovated

- In 2016, all the student lockers at the middle school were replaced
- In 2018, a portion of PPEL funds were used for the construction of the new tennis courts
- In 2018, the purchase of a new piano for Washington Elementary School

The following are some of the other areas where PPEL funding has been used:

- classroom renovations
- classroom furniture and equipment replacement
- security cameras inside and outside the buildings
- copiers in the school buildings
- computers, technology, and software
- security radio communications equipment for the buildings and school buses
- school bus purchases
- other student transportation vehicles
- lawnmowers for the grounds
- custodial cleaning equipment
- softball and baseball fields repairs
- track renovations
- football field repairs
- windows and doors replacement
- maintenance equipment
- kitchen equipment
- carpeting and flooring replacement
- parking lot and sidewalk repairs
- outside lighting repairs
- plumbing renovations
- lighting replacement with energy efficient equipment
- roof repairs
- grounds and fields drainage renovations
- heating and cooling systems repairs

Absentee voting for this election begins March 4 and absentee ballots and other election information is available through the Linn County Auditor's office 892-5300 <https://linncounty.org/856/Voters> March 22 is the last day to request an absentee ballot to be mailed to you. Voters can also vote in person at the Linn County Auditor's office at 935 2<sup>nd</sup> Street SW in Cedar Rapids from March 4 (if ballots are available) through Monday April 1.